
PULPIT DISCOURSE: THE CONCEPTUAL ORDER OF SALVATION

A pastoral script for public delivery

Speaker Edition • 2026

Customized for Ruperto Bravo Benavente (R.B.B.)

Speaker's script

Audience	Believers, nonbelievers, and the general public
Estimated duration	25-30 minutes, including pauses
References	Spanish Reina-Valera 1960 and Francisco Lacueva's Greek-Spanish Interlinear New Testament

Directions in brackets are suggestions and should not be read aloud.

Opening

Good morning, dear brothers and sisters, friends, and everyone joining us today. Thank you for opening your heart to hear the Word of God. I want to speak about a subject that may sound theological, but it touches the most personal question of all: How does God save a person?

Some of you may have walked in faith for many years. Others may be here for the first time, carrying doubts, wounds, or questions. This message is for both. I am not presenting a religious ladder or a cold formula. I am pointing to Jesus Christ, because salvation does not begin with our ability, but with God's grace; it does not rest on our merit, but on Christ's finished work.

Our title is "The Conceptual Order of Salvation." Do not be intimidated by the phrase. We are simply arranging what the Bible teaches so that we can see it clearly: grace is the source; Christ is the foundation; the gospel is the announcement; the Holy Spirit opens the understanding; the person responds in repentance and faith; and God grants a new standing, a new family, a new life, and the hope of glory.

Before we go further, hold on to this truth: we are not studying steps by which we earn God's favor. We are looking at the many facets of one gift. From beginning to end, salvation belongs to the Lord. [Brief pause]

Let us begin with the source of everything: grace.

What “conceptual order” means

Theology often uses the Latin expression *ordo salutis* to arrange the dimensions of God's saving work. “Order” does not mean that every aspect can always be separately dated. “Conceptual” means that we ask which truth grounds another, what proceeds from God's initiative, and how a person responds upon hearing the gospel.

Three horizons should be distinguished. In eternity, God purposed grace in Christ. In history, Jesus Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again. Personally, the Spirit makes the gospel announcement effective in those who believe. These horizons are related but should not be confused.

Scripture describes the same salvation as rescue, reconciliation, new birth, forgiveness, justification, adoption, sanctification, and eternal life. No single image exhausts the gift. Together they show that God does more than improve sinners: He reconciles them, grants a new standing, and begins new life within them.

Pastoral application: Friend, if you think you must first repair your entire life before approaching God, hear this: grace comes precisely to the person who cannot save himself. Come as you are, but come willing to be transformed.

[Brief pause]

Now let us lift our eyes to the foundation: Jesus Christ.

The source: the grace of God

Grace is God's undeserved favor toward those who could not save themselves. Ephesians 2:8-9 excludes boasting: salvation is by grace through faith, not by works. Conduct is not irrelevant; works are placed correctly. They are not salvation's root but its fruit.

The human condition explains why grace comes first. Sin is not merely a collection of mistakes; it is alienation from God affecting will, affections, understanding, and conduct. Romans 3:23 declares its universality. Saving initiative therefore springs not from hidden merit in us, but from God's love revealed in Christ.

Sovereign grace does not turn people into stones. It means that even hearing with hope, turning to God, and trusting Christ depends upon God's prior action. Grace awakens, calls, convinces, and sustains; it never authorizes spiritual pride.

Pastoral application: Believer, your security does not rest on saying, "I never fail." It rests on recognizing that Christ never fails. The cross was sufficient, and the tomb is empty.

[Brief pause]

But how does this work reach us? Through the gospel.

The foundation: the person and work of Christ

The center of salvation is not an inward experience but Jesus Christ. Paul summarizes gospel events: Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, was buried, and rose on the third day (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

The cross addresses guilt; the resurrection confirms victory and opens the hope of life.

Christ's death is sufficient and final. Hebrews presents a sacrifice offered once for all. Believers do not complete that work by penance, religious performance, or personal suffering. They receive through faith what Christ accomplished. Obedience that follows is gratitude, not payment.

To confess Jesus as Lord is to recognize who He is and rest in what He has done. Biblical faith does not rest its security on the intensity of an emotion, but on the faithfulness of a living Person. Our certainty does not rest on claiming that we never fail, but on recognizing that Christ never fails.

Pastoral application: The question is not merely whether we have heard religious words. The question is whether we have heard the good news of Christ and are trusting Him.

[Brief pause]

Here we must recognize the indispensable work of the Holy Spirit.

The announcement: the gospel

Romans 1:16 calls the gospel the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes. God has chosen to save through a message that must be heard, understood, and received. Christian proclamation therefore cannot be reduced to moral advice, temporary prosperity, or psychological improvement.

The gospel includes God's holiness, the reality of sin, the identity of Jesus Christ, His substitutionary death, burial, resurrection, and the call to repent and believe. Omit the resurrection and the cross is left without victory; omit sin and the cross becomes unnecessary; omit grace and the message becomes merit.

The invitation is universal and sincere: whoever comes to Christ will never be cast out (John 6:37). The messenger speaks clearly and humbly, trusting the Holy Spirit, not human pressure, to convict of sin and display the Savior's sufficiency.

The call and the work of the Holy Spirit

The gospel comes outwardly through preaching, reading, or testimony. Yet saving understanding requires the Spirit's work. John 16:8-14 presents Him convicting the world and glorifying Christ. His ministry does not draw isolated attention to Himself; it illuminates the greatness of the Son.

The effective call should not be imagined as violence against the will. God opens the heart, reveals the need, and makes Christ desirable. The person truly comes, truly believes, and truly turns. Grace does not destroy human response; it makes that response possible.

Conviction may involve sorrow, fear, sudden clarity, or a quiet process. Scripture does not prescribe one emotion. What matters is faith's object and the change of direction: abandoning every rival confidence and coming to Christ.

Pastoral application: No one can manufacture the new birth. We may explain, preach, and testify, but the Spirit convicts and gives life. Therefore, we speak clearly and pray dependently.

[Brief pause]

We now come to the heart of the human response: repentance and faith.

Regeneration: the new birth

Jesus told Nicodemus that he must be born again (John 3:3-8). Regeneration means that God communicates spiritual life where there was death. It is not mere habit reform, religious education, or a new

resolution. It is the Spirit's inward work producing a new relationship with God.

Logically, the Spirit's regenerating initiative explains why a sinner can receive the gospel from the heart. Experientially, new birth, repentance, and faith are so closely joined that we should not separate them into conscious stages divided by long intervals.

The evidence of regeneration is not instant perfection. It is a new direction: hunger for the Word, sensitivity to sin, love for Christ, and the beginning of obedience. Growth may be uneven, but new life produces real signs.

Pastoral application: To repent is not to pay for sin with tears; it is a change of mind and direction. To believe is not to repeat a magic phrase; it is to rest personally in Jesus Christ as the only Savior.

[Brief pause]

What happens to the one who believes? That person is united to Christ and declared righteous.

Conversion: repentance and faith

Mark 1:15 joins the call: repent and believe the gospel. Repentance and faith can be distinguished but never separated. Repentance turns from sin and self-reliance; faith turns to Christ and rests in Him. They are not two prices paid, but two aspects of one response.

The Greek term *metanoia* points to a change of mind reaching direction and conduct. It is more than remorse. Remorse can regret consequences without coming to God; repentance acknowledges sin, agrees with God's judgment, and seeks His mercy.

Faith, *pistis*, includes knowledge, assent, and trust. Knowing facts about Christ is not enough, and faith is not contentless optimism. To believe is to receive God's testimony concerning His Son and entrust oneself to Him as

the only Savior. Later works demonstrate faith's reality, but never replace Christ as the foundation.

Union with Christ

Many blessings of salvation are best understood through union with Christ. The believer is identified with Him in His death and resurrection, receives life in Him, and belongs to His body. This union is not a loss of personality or a mixing of essence; it is spiritual communion and representation.

In Christ condemnation is gone (Romans 8:1); in Christ the believer is a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17); in Christ every spiritual blessing is received (Ephesians 1:3). "In Christ" keeps us from treating blessings as detached objects: all are received in relationship with the Savior.

The same truth joins security and transformation. The Christ who justifies also shares His life. Free salvation is therefore not sterile. Those united to Christ are called to walk consistently with the identity they have received.

Justification: declared righteous through faith

Justification is God's act of declaring the believing sinner righteous on the basis of Christ's work. Romans 5:1 connects justification through faith with peace with God. It first describes a favorable verdict before God's court, not a process of moral improvement.

Faith does not earn justification. It is the empty hand receiving Christ. Righteousness does not come from a balance of personal virtues, but from the Savior's obedience and sacrifice. God's justice and the freeness of forgiveness are both preserved.

Justification changes the believer's standing from condemned to accepted. Sanctification progressively changes conduct. Confusing them produces two errors: trying to become perfect in order to be accepted, or assuming acceptance makes holiness unnecessary. The gospel avoids both.

Pastoral application: When God justifies, He does not declare that

sin was small. He declares that Christ was sufficient. Faith is the empty hand receiving what He won.

[Brief pause]

God does not merely acquit; He receives the believer as a child and seals that believer with His Spirit.

Reconciliation, redemption, and forgiveness

Reconciliation describes the end of hostility and the restoration of peace with God through Christ (Romans 5:10-11). Redemption speaks of liberation at a price: Christ's blood. Forgiveness says the debt of sin is canceled. These are complementary dimensions of the same work.

The words answer different needs. We are guilty and need forgiveness; enslaved and need redemption; enemies and need reconciliation. Christ fully answers each need.

Believers may approach God without denying sin's seriousness or remaining chained to guilt already addressed at the cross. Daily confession restores fellowship and expresses honesty, but it does not repeat Christ's sacrifice or rebuild the filial relationship from the ground up.

Adoption and a new identity

Salvation does not end with acquittal. God receives the believer as a child. Romans 8:15-17 speaks of the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry, "Abba, Father." Adoption grants access, belonging, loving discipline, inheritance, and hope.

This identity rests not on manufactured self-esteem but on God's promise. A child may be corrected without being treated as an enemy. The believer approaches in prayer not because performance is flawless, but because acceptance has been granted in Christ.

Adoption also creates a family. The Church is Christ's living body through the ages. Personal faith was never designed for isolation: believers learn to love, serve, forgive, and bear burdens in community.

Pastoral application: Perhaps you feel spiritually orphaned. In Christ there is adoption, access to the Father, and a secure inheritance. The Holy Spirit is not a reward for an elite; He is the seal of every believer.

[Brief pause]

Christian life begins from acceptance, and that is why we speak of sanctification and perseverance.

The seal and indwelling of the Holy Spirit

Ephesians 1:13-14 teaches that after hearing the word of truth and believing, believers were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit. The seal indicates ownership, authenticity, and security; the Spirit is the guarantee of the inheritance until final redemption.

The Spirit's indwelling is not a prize for a spiritual elite. It belongs to every believer in Christ. His presence comforts, illuminates the Word, distributes gifts, strengthens prayer, and develops holy fruit.

Christian security does not promote carelessness. Because we belong to God, we are exhorted not to grieve the Spirit and to walk worthy of our calling. The seal does not glorify the believer; it guarantees that God will carry His redemptive purpose forward.

Sanctification: growing from acceptance

Sanctification has a definitive aspect: the believer has been set apart for God. It also has a progressive aspect: learning obedience, renewing the mind, and putting sin to death. Philippians 2:12-13 keeps responsibility and grace together: believers work because God works in them.

Ordinary means of growth include Scripture, prayer, the fellowship of the Church, the Lord's Supper, service, and the Father's discipline. None purchases acceptance; all are paths through which the Spirit conforms believers to Christ.

Progress is not always linear. There are struggles, falls, and restoration. The biblical response is neither to excuse sin nor despair, but to confess, come to the Advocate, and continue. Discipline confirms the Father's love and leads toward peaceful fruit.

Pastoral application: The grace that forgives also trains us. There will be struggles and perhaps falls, but believers do not make peace with sin. They confess, return to Christ, receive correction, and keep walking.

[Brief pause]

Finally, let us look toward the completion: glorification.

Perseverance, security, and assurance

God preserves His people and calls them to persevere. These truths do not compete. Biblical warnings are real means that awaken believers to abide in Christ; promises sustain hope when they face their weakness.

The objective basis of security is Christ's work, God's promise, and the Spirit's seal. Subjective assurance grows through the Word's testimony, the Spirit's inward work, and the fruit of living faith. Not every believer enjoys the same degree of assurance at every moment.

When conscience accuses, ask first: In whom am I trusting? The gaze must return to the Savior. Then examine life honestly, confess what is needed, and seek pastoral help. Healthy assurance produces humility, gratitude, and obedience.

Glorification: the completion

Salvation looks toward a glorious end. Romans 8:30 presents glorification with the certainty of God's purpose. When Christ appears, believers will be transformed and forever be with the Lord. Redemption will reach the body and every trace of sin will be removed.

This hope does not escape the present. It comforts in grief, strengthens under persecution, and relativizes idols of success. The Church waits watchfully for her Lord without setting dates the Father has not revealed.

Glorification will show that salvation was entirely grace and that this grace produced a renewed humanity. Final praise will not celebrate redeemed self-sufficiency, but the Lamb who purchased a people for God.

Pastoral application: The believer's story does not end in a grave. Christ is coming, His people will be transformed, and they will forever be with the Lord. This hope calls us to live awake, humble, and faithful.

[Brief pause]

Appeal and conclusion

Let me bring everything together in one view. Grace begins in the heart of God. Salvation is accomplished in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The gospel announces that work. The Holy Spirit enlightens and gives life. The sinner turns to God in repentance and faith. United to Christ, the believer is justified, forgiven, reconciled, adopted, and sealed. Then the believer walks in sanctification, sustained by God, until the day of glory.

These are not twelve salvations or a race to accumulate merit. This is one rich and complete salvation, centered in Christ. Doctrine fulfills its purpose when it leads us to worship Him, comforts the believer, and invites the person who is still far away.

To you who have not yet believed: do not wait until you feel worthy. Acknowledge your need. Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again. Repent and believe the gospel. Abandon confidence in your works, inherited religion, or a passing emotion. Rest in Jesus Christ.

And to the brother or sister who arrived carrying fear: look again to the Savior. Your faith may feel weak, but weak faith can rest upon a mighty Christ. Confess what must be confessed, seek biblical care, and remember the promise: the one who comes to Christ will not be cast out.

Church of the Lord, let us proclaim the whole gospel. Let us not manipulate or replace the Spirit's work with human pressure. Let us present Christ with truth, love, and patience. Salvation begins in grace, rests on Christ, is received through faith, and is completed in glory. Therefore, all honor and all praise belong to God. Amen. [Final pause]

Supporting references

Marcos 1:15; Juan 3:3-8; 6:37; 16:8-14; Romanos 1:16-17; 3:21-26; 5:1-11; 8:1, 15-17, 29-30; 1 Corintios 15:3-4; 2 Corintios 5:17-21; Efesios 1:3-14; 2:1-10; Filipenses 2:12-13; Hebreos 7:25; 9:12; 10:10-14; 1 Juan 1:9; 5:11-13.

Holy Bible. Scripture references rendered in natural American English for oral delivery; consult the Spanish Reina-Valera 1960 as the stated base text.

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